

Melancon Led the Way with July's House-Passed Coastal Restoration Amendment
September 28, 2010

WASHINGTON D.C. – Today, U.S. Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) commented on the Obama Administration's recommendations for the long term recovery of the Gulf Coast region from the impact of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. In the report, the Administration adopts Congressman Melancon's approach to coastal funding by expanding on his amendment to dedicate BP penalty fees to coastal restoration projects. Congressman Melancon's amendment was passed by the House of Representatives in July, as part of the Consolidated Land, Energy, and Aquatic Resources (CLEAR) Act (H.R. 3534).

"We have been saying for years that in order to really do coastal restoration right, we need a dedicated funding source," Congressman Melancon said. **"These projects are just too big and too expensive to nickel-and-dime year after year. The Mabus report acknowledges this and calls for the Gulf to receive the majority of the Clean Water Act penalties for coastal restoration.**

"We know Congress must act, and the House has already shown it supports dedicating BP penalties to coastal restoration projects, having unanimously passed my amendment to do just that in July. Now, the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force must take the years of research and work that we've done and move forward. Louisiana has already developed a coastal restoration master plan, and the Administration must not waste the next decade on more studies.

"I am pleased that the Mabus report recommends accelerating Coastal Impact Assistance Program dollars to the states for coastal restoration projects. I urge the Administration to also support moving up the start date for greater offshore revenue-sharing dollars to start flowing to energy-producing states. We need this influx of funding now, so Louisiana won't have to wait until 2017 to begin seriously tackling coastal restoration."

Congressman Melancon led the fight to dedicate BP penalties to coastal restoration projects in Louisiana with the passage in July of his amendment by the House of Representatives. The [Melancon Coastal Restoration Amendment](#)

would create a new civil penalty for any oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico of more than 1 million barrels, including the BP disaster, and direct the funding to Gulf coastal restoration projects. In urging his colleagues to support the new penalty, Congressman Melancon argued that the environmental damage caused by the BP oil disaster will take decades for Louisiana to fully recover from. The Melancon amendment would hold BP accountable by law for repairing the destruction.

Congressman Melancon represents in Congress the areas of coastal Louisiana most directly affected by the oil leak, including Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary and southern Jefferson Parishes. The Deepwater Horizon platform was located 50 miles off the coast of Louisiana's Third Congressional District.

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